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—Sam Hynes

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THIS WEEK

Week by Week 363

Catholic Nations: Myth or Reality?
by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn 366

Cultural Exchanges with Russia
by Sam Hynes 369

Legend: A Poem
by John Fandel 371

An Article of Peace
by John Cogley 372

American Best Sellers
by John P. Sisk 373

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 376

The Stage
by Richard Hayes 377

Books 380

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

REPORT ON EDUCATION

TO SAY THAT everybody talks about education but nobody does anything about it would not be quite accurate, of course, but it would be accurate enough to describe a shameful fact of American life. The rise of the sputniks, made in U.S.S.R., frightened us into a great deal of talk about the problems of our educational system, but not to the point where anything was done about it. And now even the talk has pretty much subsided.

Not quite, however. The Rockefeller Brothers Fund recently issued a comprehensive report on the state of American education, following up three previous, equally distinguished studies of "major foreign and domestic opportunities likely to confront the United States over the next ten to fifteen years." The Rockefeller report, prepared by a fifteen-member panel of eminent educators and professional and civic leaders, examines current educational practices, as a number of recent studies have done, but also meets head-on the fundamental assumptions which have determined American educational policy, a collision usually avoided by those who talk about the problem.

One of the most troublesome points of education in a political democracy is that of equality. The development of even a cultural elite is a process viewed by the believer in democracy with profound and understandable mistrust. "Conformism" and "togetherness," as we know, are merely contemporary labels for the levelling pressures seen long ago to be inherent in the democratic society. Despite these pressures, however, such a society needs to nurture, *wants* to nurture, excellence among its people. Limitless opportunity and the ideal of success, for example—and not just in a monetary sense—are as much part of the democratic outlook as the levelling ideas they clash with.

The Rockefeller report takes a forthright position on this emotionally charged and much debated issue, advancing unashamedly the proposition that men are unequal—in their capacities—and must be educated accordingly. The "shock troop" and "crash program" proposals put forth by some educators and scientists after the sputniks are not the answers envisaged by the report, nor is the European system of separated, "caste" curricula. Talent can be identified, encouraged and fulfilled within the framework of today's schools, according to the report, but only by means of specific provisions for just such fulfillment and after the fact of student inequality is understood and accepted.

THE SAD ESTATE of the teaching profession is another of our current educational ills taken up by the panel. The training of teachers is called "rigid and shallow," a declaration sure to arouse the antagonism of the teachers' colleges, and teachers are seen to be thwarted in their real work by trifling and extraneous duties and responsibilities.

Recommendations here, and in the problem of curriculum, are detailed, balanced and provocative. But the most compelling portion of the report is likely that which concerns the question of finance. "Good education is expensive," the report states very simply, "a fact which the American people have never been quite prepared to face." And having established this unpleasant but inescapable truth, it goes on to consider the possible means of meeting this expense. Aside from the acceptance of Federal aid, American taxpayers can work to overhaul local tax systems, and private schools can work to reduce costs in every way. But some form of Federal aid is judged to be inevitable. Of all the forms of such aid, it is declared, Federal aid for construction would seem to be the least hazardous.

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There is much more in the report—some of it immediately convincing, some of it open to serious question, but all of it compelling and provocative. Mere talk about education will not solve this crucial problem of our age, of course, but the talk is essential if we are to know what it is we want to do about it, and why and how. We can only hope that this notable public service by the Rockefeller Fund will re-vitalize the faltering discussion, and that the talk will inspire us to take action. To quote the report again: "There is no more searching or difficult problem for a free people than to identify, nurture, and wisely use its own talents."

N.A.A.C.P. IN ALABAMA

EVER SINCE the Supreme Court ruled against segregation in the public schools, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has suffered constant legal harassment in various Southern states. A small example of what the organization has to contend with came up recently in Alabama, where a "contempt" case against the N.A.A.C.P. is pending. Some weeks ago the judge of the Circuit Court scheduled to hear the case delivered a campaign speech in which he promised to deliver a "mortal blow" against the N.A.A.C.P. In view of these remarks, attorneys for the N.A.A.C.P. asked that he disqualify himself from hearing the contempt case against the Negro organization—a request few people, we think, would consider unreasonable. But did the judge accede to their request and disqualify himself? He did not. It is no wonder that Negroes involved in these cases often have a hard time distinguishing between the prosecutor and the judge. From where we sit, it is not always easy to tell the difference either.

A TIME FOR JUDGMENT

NEW DIFFERENCES between Sherman Adams and the House Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight have raised old but still unsolved problems. The case of Sherman Adams is to remain, apparently, one of the major diversions in domestic politics during this summer. And no less, of course, should have been expected. For both Democrats and campaigning Republicans, the notoriety was too great to be dismissed or treated lightly. For purposes of exploitation in one case, and for self-protection in the other, both groups called for his resignation.

Our opinion is substantially what it was when the case of Sherman Adams first developed. We then said that "a person in his position, it is argued, should never accept a gift that might bring his private conscience into conflict with public interest, or which might appear to do so. And Mr. Adams has acted so that at least the appearance of such a conflict is present. What is most seriously called into question, therefore, is not his moral rectitude but his judgment."

But the methods which the House subcommittee has employed in receiving additional testimony unfavorable to Mr. Adams have called its own judgment into question and have shifted, to some degree, the focus of public interest. For newer and more damaging charges have been brought against Mr. Adams by John Fox, a Boston lawyer, financier, ex-publisher, and one-time associate of Mr. Goldfine. And these charges, so far unsubstantiated, have been made not in closed but in open session.

Mr. Adams termed the first series of charges which Mr. Fox brought against him "falsehoods" and "malicious accusations." He also found it "incredible" that a "completely irresponsible witness" had been allowed to "use the committee as a forum for making false accusations." The subcommittee responded by allowing Mr. Fox to give a repeat performance the following day.

The entire incident raises the large question of the use which Congressional committees make of their witnesses. Rules of the House, for instance, enjoin its committees from giving a public hearing to a witness whose testimony might defame or incriminate a second party. This is a rule, however, which House committees have not always observed. In the present instance Representative Oren Harris, Democrat from Arkansas, denied a request to invoke the rule, while Representative Joseph O'Hara was striving to see that Mr. Fox would not make further charges in open session.

The differences of opinion about the value, or the damage, of such open hearings have not been determined simply along party lines. For instance, John B. Bennett, Republican from Michigan, fears that testimony heard in closed session might allow a distorted, and ultimately more damaging, version to be "leaked" to the press. At the same time John Flynt, a Democrat from Georgia, stated that it is a serious error to grant Mr. Fox an open forum unless he can document his charges.

It is with the latter judgment that we agree. If Mr. Fox's charges cannot be substantiated, then Mr. Adams, by being publicly submitted to false charges, has been damaged in a way that no later

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clearance can rectify. If proof for the charges exists, it should be brought forward now. Nor does Mr. Bennett's well-intentioned argument persuade. It does not seem sensible to accept present harm in order to ward off what is at most a possible danger.

The charges against Mr. Adams seem worth examination. But Mr. Adams deserves fair treatment. The fact that he is a prominent person does not mean that he should escape the investigation which would be the lot of another man. But neither should he be subjected to unjust treatment. If the subcommittee has been following customary procedure, it is clear some customs should be changed.

NEW LABOR PROBE

BY THE TIME this editorial appears in print, the Senate Rackets Committee headed by Senator John L. McClellan should be back on the front pages. Quiet for a while, the Committee is now ready to proceed with its most ambitious venture to date, a five-month effort to prove that a criminal syndicate operates on both sides of the labor-management fence. Unless we miss our guess, the hearings will startle a good many people.

First target for Senator McClellan's Committee is the New York area. There the Senate group will turn its attention immediately to the garment industry, where racketeer infiltration is a poorly kept secret. Today Pennsylvania and other areas around New York are dotted with "runaway" shops which successfully defy the garment-industry unions. Many of these ventures are owned and operated by men with long criminal records; their success is made possible by links with other underground elements, particularly in the trucking business which holds the secret to success or failure in the high-speed garment industry. These connections in the trucking industry, plus the use of low-paid, non-union labor, give racketeer-allied employers a competitive "edge" on price which can and often does spell financial ruin for honest competitors.

To a large extent, the recent strike by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union was an attempt to remove the sweatshop differential which is threatening the welfare of the entire industry. That strike was successful, but for lasting reform the union needs help. When the New York *Herald Tribune* recently ran a series of articles on the infestation of the dress industry by racketeers, for example, I.L.G.W.U. President David Dubinsky said it disclosed racketeer-connections inside the industry of which even the union was unaware. A searching public inquiry should be able to do an even more thorough job.

Meantime, the I.L.G.W.U. and industry leaders are stepping up their own efforts to protect decent standards. One key part of that effort will be a campaign to put union labels in all women's dresses as an "important weapon against racketeers and chiselers." To promote and administer this union-label campaign, a five million dollar fund will be raised and spent during the next two years, three million of it to come from employers and two million from the union. Even in these days of inflation, five million dollars is a large sum for such a campaign. The readiness of manufacturers and labor leaders to spend it reveals how hard the garment industry has been hit by the return of the sweatshop and by under-the-counter cheating.

Under these circumstances, it seems to us beyond question that the workers and employers in the garment industry deserve cooperation in their efforts to end racketeer infiltration and re-establish decent standards throughout the industry. We hope the forthcoming probe by the Senate Rackets Committee will be thorough and that local prosecutors will be quick to use any evidence that is uncovered. And we hope too that the drive for a union label in women's dresses will receive widespread public support. It certainly should, if the buying public can be made to realize that buying a non-union dress may very well mean putting money into the pockets of racketeers.

GOMULKA'S RESISTANCE

IF THERE existed any real question about the degree of independence which Poland, under Wladyslaw Gomulka, has been able to wrest from Russia it has now been answered: virtually none. It was a testimony to Polish resistance that M. Gomulka remained so long silent about the murder of Imre Nagy and his colleagues. But it is just as sure a sign of the greater Russian pressure—military, economic and political—that he has finally made a major speech criticizing Yugoslavia and accepting, though not actually justifying, the secret trial and execution of Nagy.

Within Poland there is, of course, dissidence and disagreement. The resistance to and hatred of Russia could well up as it did in Hungary—except that Russia and Poland remember too well the Hungarian massacre and the inability of Western countries to be of real assistance. Poland, therefore, is being bound close by the recent harsh line of Russia.

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Myth or Reality?
Catholic Nations

"Religion is the most important factor in molding the mind and the outlook of a nation or a region"

by ERIK VON KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN

WHENEVER a European lecturing at an American university or college mentions the concept of a "Catholic nation," he is likely to encounter violent reactions—usually coming from good Catholics. Even emphasis on the fact that the term has to be understood in a socio-cultural and purely psychological sense, not a religious one, rarely diminishes the vigor of the protest. Why is it that Catholic Americans fight so furiously against a notion which in Europe belongs to the indispensable inventory of the sociologist, the student of ethnic psychology, even the politician?

At the root of this rejection lies a misunderstanding caused by a certain arrogant, narrow and even heretical assertion not too rare among European Catholics—the notorious statement that "Europe is the Faith and the Faith is Europe." Like all truly dangerous formulations, this too contains a grain of truth. Europe of the past, no less than Europe of today, with its virtues and vices, its glories and degradations, Europe which in the words of Douglas Jerrold has become the "apostle of its own apostasy," cannot be conceived without its Christian pre-history and its Catholic background. Neither Lutheranism nor Calvinism, not even the French Revolution, nineteenth century Liberalism, Socialism or Communism are imaginable without their Catholic antecedents.

At the same time, however, it would be criminal to narrow down our Faith, with its universal and permanent truths, to a mere geographic and historical unit called Europe. A formulation much nearer the truth is that Europe as we know it is unthinkable without the Faith, but the Faith is much more than just Europe. Europe (as we know it) cannot do without the Faith, but the Faith, if need be, can dispense with Europe.

The equation of the Faith with Europe unavoidably puts the American Catholic on guard. He is naturally proud of his country; he frequently chafes under the accusation that, owing to his Faith, he is not fully an American; he also resents the implied suspicion that as an American he could never be as fully a Catholic as, let us say, a Portuguese, a Sicilian or a Lithuanian. (Not that he particularly admires these people, but he still resents the insinuation.) And then he vividly remembers the accounts of the great faithlessness of Europe. Is not every Frenchman past the elementary school age a declared atheist? Is the Faith in Italy not merely an affair of illiterate Calabrese peasants? Was not Adolf Hitler a typical European Catholic? Is not Ireland—and Ireland alone—the last remnant of the Faith in Europe, and a remnant deplorably riddled with clericalism, censorship and superstition? Where else is there a "real" Catholicism except in the United States, a country neither "Catholic" nor "Protestant," but a "land of the free" where everybody "worships in the church of his choice"?

NOW ALL THESE views are not entirely without substance. Here again the grain of truth helps to reinforce a distortion. There are large regions in Europe (though rarely entire nations) where the Catholic Faith is practiced by a substantial majority and others again where the Church as a living proposition rests on a distinct minority. Yet the term "Catholic nation" (or "Calvinist," "Lutheran," etc.) as used by European scholars, has little to do with the actual practice of the Faith. It is even well understood that the daily communicant in Sardinia, Navarre or the Black Forest as a "contemporary" member of Western civilization is profoundly influenced by notions emanating ultimately from the (now ebbing) Protestant ascendancy in the Western World as well as by the secularist-materialist

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trends engulfing Occident and Orient alike. At the same time, however, it is self-evident to the European that nations or populations whose cultural background has a Catholic keynote are quite different from those which have been culturally and mentally formed by Calvinism, Mohammedanism, Lutheranism or the Eastern Schism. A real proof lies in the comparison of people living in specific territorial units. A Spanish Methodist, needless to say, will have a great many "Catholic," an English Catholic numerous "Anglican" and "Protestant" characteristics; but neither the Spanish Methodist nor the English Catholic tends to be typical of his own nation.

The European, of course, has a real advantage in making these differentiations, because in the Old World we have distinct denominational demarcation lines, which more often than not do not coincide with the ethical or political boundaries. Our religious demarcation lines usually dissect compact nations, but to the sensitive traveler they are immediately apparent. To an American visitor, for instance, the atmosphere of Zürich and Zug—thirty minutes from each other by train—may be simply "Swiss," but to us these cities are worlds apart. And the very same thing which separates Zürich from Zug, i.e., the religious background, also divides Hertogenbosch from Utrecht or Frankfurt from Mainz. The list could be continued indefinitely.

The American in his own country has little opportunity to study these group differences. Religiously and culturally the United States acts like a kind of cocktail shaker. There are, admittedly, "Little Italys," "Little Bohemias," Yorkvilles, Chinatowns and Ciceros in the big American cities; there are even villages compactly inhabited by entire European immigrant groups; but here the ethnic rather than the denominational element is chiefly important. With the exception of their cuisine these immigrants usually have come with little cultural baggage, and they were and still are expected to assimilate in every way to the "Anglo-American" pattern. Yet in Europe, especially among the non-intellectual classes, religion is so deeply intertwined with the way of life that physical uprooting results only too often in a loss of religion. The errors of Cahenslyism, in America, have to be understood precisely in the light of these facts. The average American Catholic, in his own experience, cannot see much that is specifically Catholic in an Italian restaurant, a Bavarian beer garden, a *Rathskeller* or a Hungarian diner. He admits that the atmosphere of Québec, Santa Fé or of the Vieux Carré in New Orleans is "Old World" (a label he would not grant to Salem or New Bedford) but this to him means "Latin" rather than Catholic.

And it is this "Latin" label which harbors all sorts of confusions. It would be difficult to use the term in its American or British meaning either for the French Calvinists and the City of Geneva or for the Reformed Italian-Swiss living in the Bregaglia Valley. What the average American considers to be "Latin" he would find much better represented in the Western Tyrol, for instance—German in language but Catholic in faith, and bordering on the Reformed Rhaeto-Roman, nominally Latin Switzerland. The "Latin" Rhaeto-Roman Lower Engadine is anything but "gay," "naughty," "sensual," "broadminded" or "easygoing." These qualities one finds rather in the Tyrol.

AND WHY? Because religion—and it is rather odd that one should have to insist upon this to certain Catholics—is the most important factor in molding the mind and the outlook of a nation or a region. Atheism, agnosticism, indifference and religious sloth may even be prevalent in a "Catholic" nation, but they never entirely eliminate the religious factor. Even if the Faith is being "lived up to" merely by a minority, it still will determine the nation's pattern of mind and behavior. By the same token, even if professed agnosticism in Northern Holland is rapidly gaining ground, the basic outlook of the Dutch will remain "Calvinistic" for a long time to come, and the Calvinist minority of tomorrow is going to provide influences and emanations strong enough to "feed" this Calvinist substance in the North Dutch pattern. Paris inside the city limits has certainly not more than twenty-five per cent of occasionally or permanently practicing Catholics, but anybody watching the faces of a Parisian audience just having viewed the film version of "The Diary of a Country Priest"—a dismal failure in New York—will understand at once that the film's religious message and content were immediately grasped.

If the religious influence is really so strong, some non-Catholic reader might remark, then a United States with a strong Catholic majority might actually be a different country altogether. There is a tendency among certain American Catholics to answer this remark with hands raised in pious horror, and to the silly insinuation that New York then might become a mammoth Ávila they give the equally silly answer that nothing at all would be changed were the United States to become predominantly Catholic. Granted that religion is the dominant factor, the ethnic ("national," "racial") elements have their place too. And by becoming overwhelmingly Catholic—a purely academic speculation—the United States thereby would not become Latin (in the real sense of the term). The affinities of a larger American Catholic living pattern would likely point in the direction of Ireland, Holland, Westphalia and perhaps Flanders, and not in that of Portugal, the Philippine Islands or Nicaragua. At any rate, it would be depressing indeed if an increase of the Catholic Faith in width and depth would have no other effect on American life than a multiplication of no-

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venas, scapulars, phosphorescent crucifixes and bingo parties in the invisible and sheltered recesses of what is so curiously called a "pluralist society."

From these considerations it should now be evident that it is legitimate to talk of religiously determined nations (or regions) independently from Sacramental statistics. The study of the cultural effects of religions and of their underlying theologies rather than of their ecclesiastic structures is of paramount importance. There are, for instance, religious reasons for the original rise not only of capitalism, but also of mass-production, parliamentarism and even competitive sports in the Protestant (Calvinistic) rather than in the Catholic world.

BUT WHAT ARE the common characteristics of the "Catholic populations" (*partly* shared by the Schismatics)? The characteristics enumerated below are those commonly accepted in Europe. They do not constitute absolute evaluations but are judgments relative to the trends prevailing in the world of post-Reformatory ("liberal") Protestantism which, needless to say, still includes numerous Reformatory concepts. Some of these items will, of course, be hotly contested —by some Catholics as well as Protestants and secularists.

According to these quite commonly accepted views the "Catholic peoples" are:

Revolutionary rather than evolutionary.

Personalistic ("individualistic" in a loose sense).

Uncooperative (rather than "communitarian"). They are bad organizers but good improvisers.

Unwilling to serve unless in a spirit of personal affection. They are unenthusiastic about mere "government by law."

Distinctly not "law abiding"; hence also lax in their obedience to the laws of the Church; hence also the possibility of "anti-clericalism."

Sensual-sensuous in a profound sense, which involves an Epicurean sense of life encompassing everything from Eros to art to gastronomy.

Believing implicitly or explicitly in the Scholastic tenet that the intellectual virtues are higher than the moral virtues and that among the moral virtues fortitude ranks before temperance (moderation in food, chastity, etc.)

Averse to montonous, impersonal work (assembly lines, etc.) and highly imaginative.

Impressed by sanctity, intellect, artistic power, courage. Ideals: the Saint, the Intellectual, the Artist, the Warrior and the numerous combinations among these "types." No "automatic" reverence for the priesthood.

Curiously divided between a certain cold rationality and a passionate emotionalism. (Cool brains and hot hearts, and not vice-versa.)

Believing in absolutes but careless and haphazard in the execution of plans. Contemptous of compromise, dogmatic in the intellectual and tolerant in the human sphere.

Anarchical in their relations with state and society. Hostile to conformity. Objects of loyalty: the family in the narrow and wide sense of the term.

Neither misogynous nor "purposely" masculine.

"Inner-directed" rather than "outer-directed." (See Father Ong's excellent article in The Commonweal, Dec. 2, 1955.)

Death-centered in varying degrees.

The list could be continued *ad libitum,* but I know that even these few points are in conflict with the prevailing myths and clichés. These are usually dominated by the concept of an authoritarian Church with the character of an absolute monarchy. Yet here one has to remember the words of Édouard de Laboulaye in 1869 insisting that the Popes live in the palaces of the Caesars, which speak the language of power, but that under these magnificent structures are the Catacombs, which talk the language of liberty. And in the Catacombs we can see the symbol of the foundations of the Church: her theology, a theology which compared with the tenets of the Reformers is essentially *liberal,* which gives to man endowed with free will and the supremacy of conscience a "godlike" position, which sees in the Christian a "King and Priest." The *Soli-Deo Gloria* in its narrow Calvinistic interpretation is alien to us. Nor should the role of our dogmatism be misunderstood. Only the person believing in absolute, immovable truths can be truly *tolerant*: the relativist can only be *indifferent.*

All this ought to be evident to the man who travels or resides in alien countries with open eyes, sensitive ears and a generous heart. Still, I remember an irate American Catholic who warned me that my rough outline of the "Catholic" character showed it in direct opposition to the teaching of St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure and the Baltimore Catechism!

There is obviously no person who could be described as *the* "Catholic type" but if I would have to produce, at short notice, a representative "Catholic type," in the psychological, socio-cultural sense in which I have defined the term, I might evoke the memory of a Carlist *requeté* whom I met on the Aragon front back in 1938, an old farmer with a Sacred Heart badge and an antiquated rifle who told me that nothing could make him happier than to fight and to die for *Dios, Patria, Rey,* "to fight and to die with a prayer on his lips and, above all, without hatred." The Sacred Heart: the Black Banner with skull and cross-bones; Love, Death and Freedom. I remembered him and his words again in the days when the Hungarians, the people of the *Regnum Marianum,* died for God, Liberty and Human Dignity.

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The exchange program is essentially an attempt to combat international ignorance

Cultural Exchanges with Russia

by SAM HYNES

THE CURRENT critical excitement over the Moiseyev ballet recalls another time and another Russian dance group that captivated an English-speaking audience. The year was 1911, the place was London: Diaghilev's company was making its first appearance in England, with Pavlova and Nijinsky as its stars. That same year "The Cherry Orchard" was first performed in London, and the next year *The Brothers Karamazov* was first published in English; English intellectuals fell in love with Russian writing and Russian dancing all at once.

But in those days the exchanging of cultures was easier. A cousin of England's king was on the Russian throne, and there were no passports. Enthusiasms for cultural achievements could be simple, and without political implications. To us, looking back over almost fifty years, that world before the war seems incredibly innocent, and incredibly remote.

The contrast between East-West cultural relations in the past and present has been heightened in recent months by the agreement which our government has entered into with the Soviet Union, to attempt to do by official arrangement what was done by enthusiasm in that other, halcyon time—to interchange the idea of our cultures with that of another nation. The Moiseyev group is one of the first of exchanges that will bring five hundred Russians to America and the same number of Americans to Russia before the year ends.

The history of the program really goes back to the summer of 1955, when the heads of the governments at the Geneva conference included in their directive to their foreign ministers, the following paragraph: "The foreign ministers should by means of experts study measures including those possible in organs and agencies of the United Nations, which could (A) bring about a progressive elimination of barriers which interfere with free communications and peaceful trade between peoples and (B) bring about such free contacts and exchanges as are to the mutual advantage of the countries and peoples concerned."

At the foreign ministers' conference that fall these goals were worked out in considerable detail; and in the months that followed, while certain goals such as ending Soviet jamming of Western information broadcasts made no headway, there was an increasing exchange of technical missions. The Iron Curtain seemed to be rising. Then came the Hungarian Revolution, and exchanges ended in recriminations.

DURING the spring of 1957 the exchange program slowly and quietly got under way once more; groups of mass-feeding experts, and public health officials, and even some experts in the use of peat were sent by the United States to the Soviet Union. But it was not until Mr. Khrushchev's American television appearance in June that Cultural Exchange became news. On this occasion, as so often in the past, the Russians calmly took credit for urging on us a program already in existence, and chided us for not having done something about it ourselves. Khrushchev urged first of all that "all restrictions on trade should be removed. We should begin with that." He went on to plead: "You must do away with your Iron Curtain and not be afraid of Soviet cooks arriving in the United States—I don't think they will make any revolution in your country. Therefore that is the first condition. Then there should be exchanges of cultural delegations. There must be more contacts between our peoples, between business men. That is the main thing, I would say."

That is pretty vague, though there are a couple of points worth nothing. The crack about our Iron Curtain is a reference to the fingerprinting requirements of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act; the Russians had argued that we were keeping their citizens out of the U.S. by this device, and hence were acting in bad faith in talking cultural relations. The cooks and business men anticipate the later Soviet proposals toward technicians rather than tenors.

Mr. Dulles' reaction to Khrushchev's speech was characteristic. He remarked that he had not heard or seen the speech, but that he was suspicious of it. It sounded like the same old line. He was not being taken in. He had tried the same proposals at Geneva, and had had no luck then. His answers to reporters' questions made it clear that he regarded cultural exchange as another propaganda weapon and as nothing

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more. "I don't think one can generalize about cultural exchanges in general," he said. "Sometimes there is benefit to the forces that we want to assist in cultural exchanges and sometimes there is not."

But in spite of Mr. Dulles' suspicions, negotiations had begun. Notes were exchanged between the State Department and the Soviet government leading to the beginning of formal negotiations in October. Then George N. Zaroubin, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, and William S. B. Lacy, head of the State Department's East-West office, sat down to the first of a number of meetings. These meetings were unique among recent American-Soviet negotiations; they were conducted without publicity and without rancor at a time when the two governments were publicly denouncing each other on political and military matters. They were conducted at an official level considerably below recent meetings. And they succeeded.

The opening statements of Mr. Zaroubin and Mr. Lacy reveal a good deal about their respective governments' intentions and attitudes. Mr. Lacy saw the aim of the meetings as the discussion of "ways and means to develop and increase contacts in the technical, scientific and cultural fields between peoples of the U. S. and the U.S.S.R." "It is my hope," he went on, "that by sitting down together in an informal way we may be able to reach some new understanding and common approach to the problems involved in exchange—not only in exchanging scientists, technicians, entertainers, athletes and the like, but exchange of information and ideas. . . ." He also managed to include some censorious remarks about the Russian attitude toward exchange which suggested the hand of Mr. Dulles in the text.

Mr. Zaroubin's remarks were neither high-minded nor high-handed; he did not mention ideas as a possible medium of exchange nor did he criticize the activities of the American government. Instead, he ran rapidly through a list of fifty-two fields in which the Soviets would like to exchange delegations—fields ranging from bridge construction to choreography, but notably weighed toward technical subjects. If Mr. Dulles was lurking behind Mr. Lacy's remarks, Khrushchev, with his cooks and business men, was behind Mr. Zaroubin's.

THE TALKS continued over the end of the year, and were still going on when Mr. Eisenhower, in his State of the Union speech urged the Soviet government "to cooperate in turning principle into practice by prompt and tangible actions that will break down the unnatural barriers that have blocked the flow of thought and understanding between our peoples." They were still going on when Mr. Dulles made the following classic formulation of his foreign policy insofar as it affected cultural exchanges:

"There again is an area where there may be a common interest in certain types of exchanges—exchanges of information, exchanges of technical people, exchanges of students, and things of that sort. As I say, topics have been agreed upon; the language of implementation is being agreed upon. That is a useful kind of an agreement. We don't jeopardize the safety of the United States on such an agreement. It's an agreement where both sides have to move almost in parallel concurrent steps. If they don't carry out their part of the agreement we don't carry out ours. So there is no great risk involved. That is the type of agreement which can usefully be carried out."

The lack of imagination and vision in these remarks is staggering; one is astonished that Mr. Lacy could negotiate successfully under such a handicap. Nevertheless, he did, and in January of this year the pact was signed.

The pact, so written, specifies ten areas in which reciprocal exchanges will be made: radio and television broadcasts—documentary, musical, theatrical, and others "devoted to discussion of such international political problems as may be agreed upon by both parties"; groups of specialists in industry, agriculture, and medicine; representatives of cultural, civic, youth and student groups, and artists; delegates of the Supreme Soviet and the United States Congress; films, mainly documentary, and groups of persons associated with film production; theatrical, choral and choreographic groups, symphony orchestras and artistic performers; scientists; university professors and instructors, and students; athletes; exhibits (to begin with one on the peaceful use of atomic energy).

This is a significant achievement, especially if one considers that this is the first successful Russian-American negotiaion since the Austrian state treaty of May, 1955. If it works it will mean that roughly five times as many persons will be exchanged this year as were exchanged in 1957, and that a number of fields will be opened which have been closed to exchange. But at the same time we must recognize the limitations and acknowledge the downright failures of the negotiations. The United States delegation failed to persuade the Russians to stop jamming our news and information broadcasts, to allow us uncensored air time in Russia, or to open their country to unrestricted

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travel by American tourists. The Russians in turn failed to persuade the Americans to minimize their travel restrictions or to agree on direct commercial air traffic between the two countries. (Both of these points are to continue under negotiation.)

OF THE points agreed upon, some look considerably better than in fact they are. We agreed to send industrial missions to the U. S. S. R., but whereas they asked for forty, they got three. We agreed to exchange students, but only twenty in 1958-9, and thirty in the following year (compare our present exchange with the United Kingdom—last year there were 834 American students in the U. K., and 745 British students in the United States). We agreed to exchange musical performers, but in effect only approved what Sol Hurok, acting as a one-man cultural exchange agency, had arranged six months earlier. We agreed to exchange films, but in fact Russian films have been available in this country for some time, and the pact is not likely to have much effect on American programs. In short, we cannot really expect that the effect of the exchange pact will be very startling or very immediate, either in Russia or in this country.

Furthermore, it would be foolish to expect that an agreement on cultural exchange would solve anything, even if carried out on a far greater scale than this one. As Marshal Bulganin was quick to point out, this pact is very nice, but the serious international problems still exist. Cultural exchange will not unify Germany or negotiate disarmament or stop nuclear testing. It will at best put the people of our countries in a better position from which to negotiate; that is, in a position of familiarity with the opposing side. In the case of international relations it is more likely to be ignorance than familiarity which breeds contempt—and fear and hate. The exchange program is essentially an attempt to combat international ignorance, starting at the base of international relations rather than at the summit. We have seen summit negotiations fail; the opposite extreme is at least worth a try.

We must also recognize that an arrangement like the present one is at best an artificial, pump-priming scheme. Eventually, the exchanging of ideas will have to come naturally and freely from the needs and curiosities of the peoples involved, rather than by governmental arrangement. In this area our State Department has been singularly unimaginative and resistant; if the exchange of information and ideas is to be made free we must first free ourselves of Mr. Dulles' "useful kind of agreement" philosophy. We must be willing to venture, and to act first. The whole history of the exchange negotiations, if it proves anything, proves this: that we cannot win even the propaganda war with Yankee suspicion and counterpunches.

It would be a grave mistake, however, to regard this program, as Mr. Dulles seems to, as simply another propaganda device on a par with Voice of America broadcasts or Drew Pearson's balloons. If we believe, not that "our way of life" is better than theirs, but that the truth is better than lies, then we must recognize that cultural exchange is a weapon powerful beyond all others in the service of truth, because it deals in human beings, as well as in ideas.

By bringing Russians to this country, and by sending our artists and technicians to Russia, we can demonstrate to the Soviet people that what they have been taught about us is false. One of the principal propaganda advantages of the Soviet rulers has always been their ability to make with impunity one statement for export and a contradictory one for domestic consumption; the Russian people, in their looking-glass world, have had no chance to test the party's version of reality. Now five hundred Russians and five hundred Americans a year can scarcely be expected to alter this situation very dramatically. Nevertheless, they can plant the knowledge of the truth where we need it most —behind the Iron Curtain.

For our part, the exchange program may provide for some Americans a substitute, and more accurate image of that sinister entity, the Russian—instead of an editorial-page caricature of a pipe-smoking bear, or a vodka-drinking man who looks like a pig, they will have a live specimen to examine. There are obvious dangers here, of course; we can hardly expect that the Soviets will not use their representatives for strenuous propaganda purposes, and our natural national gullibility may mislead us even with the real thing before us. But the danger is less than the danger of ignorance, which is the greatest obstacle we now face.

LEGEND

After he had killed the dragon,
Time seemed to drag on

And on. There was nothing to do
After the great to-do.

He longed for a long pilgrimage,
To be a pilgrim, age

Into a holy wisdom, be lieve
To follow and believe

Some greater cause, request
A favor of his Lord, *re*: quest.

And had his wish. His story
Is old as he is old as history.

JOHN FANDEL.

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AN ARTICLE OF PEACE

JAMES O'GARA in his report on the Religion in a Free Society seminar [May 30] asked what Catholics might learn from the experience. "The central lesson," he wrote, "involves the way the Church looks to those who are not Catholics, for this image is clearly a distorted and frightening one—so much so that no one who sees the Church in this way could feel anything but dread. . . . They see not the Church of Christ that Catholics behold but a huge monolithic structure, a kind of vast pressure group intent on restricting here, banning there and picketing everywhere."

Two of these Here and There columns in recent weeks have been given over to further thoughts about this.

But Catholics were not the only ones to make some unpleasant discoveries about themselves during the seminar. In the June 23 issue of *Christianity and Crisis,* Arthur Moore, a Methodist journalist, presented a Protestant reaction. "Perhaps the basic question," Mr. Moore wrote, "is whether we do not make the naive assumption that the United States somehow or other belongs to us as Protestants. A case can perhaps be made that the First Amendment rests upon a 'free church' spirit and cannot be sustained without such a spirit, but to accept this case seems to me to involve Protestants in many more difficulties than it solves. Even if this argument is historically true, we are now too far down the stream of a truly pluralistic society for this fact to have much more than a nostalgic value."

He adds later: "What we really want, it often seems, is for the Roman Church to become a Protestant group and this it will not do. To accept this fact is not in any sense to 'give in to Rome' but to be able to have an honest understanding of what our problems are. Too much we Protestants are still captives of our stereotypes of the Roman Catholic Church. (Not that there aren't plenty of Catholics to confirm us in these stereotypes.) We see what we want to see and we do not see what doesn't fit our prejudices. . . . The obverse of this is our bland geniality to secularism."

I am not sure that Mr. Moore and I would see eye to eye on the First Amendment, but I am grateful that some Protestant has taken note of the tendency to treat it as a canon of Protestant teaching.

It is true that separation of Church and State is easily compatible with free-church theology. If one insists on theologizing the First Amendment, I suppose that the free-church spirit—rather than the Anglican, Lutheran or Calvinist spirit—is what sustains it. But the precise danger is that the Amendment should be theologized at all. The danger lies in the Amendment's being conceived as a proposition which tells us something about the nature of the church. To use Father Murray's terminology, the danger lies in the First Amendment's being conceived as dogma rather than as law, as an article of supernatural faith rather than an article of civic peace.

Here, it seems to me, is where Msgr. Ryan and Father Boland went wrong when they wrote about the wholly remote possibility of a "Catholic State" in this country and produced the unfortunate paragraphs that have haunted Protestants and embarrassed Catholics ever since. Ryan and Boland introduced theology into the First Amendment and concluded, logically enough, that the Amendment would have to be changed according to the nature of the Church which the State recognized. An Anglican, Calvinist or Lutheran theologizing of the Amendment might have produced a similar conclusion. For there is not only a "Catholic State" but the ghost of a "Protestant State" as well to disturb our dreams. Separation of Church and State, as we understand it, even today does not exist in Anglican England, Presbyterian Scotland, Lutheran Sweden or, for that matter, in Jewish Israel. In each of these places Church-State law has been theologized. Either the Church is described as "the State at prayer" or, as in Israel, the national religion is thought of in some kind of theocratic terms; the State as such acknowledges that in some way or other one religion is superior. Most of the great Protestant churches have been established someplace at some time, several of them in this country. Catholicism is the established religion of a dozen or more nations on both continents. In the one place where it is possible, Judaism has been established, and very recently so.

The separation of Church and State has been called the most original and lasting contribution American thinkers have given to the Western world. Certainly it was a unique contribution. Above all, though, it was a *political* contribution. It did not advance by one whit our knowledge of God or of His church. It did not canonize any religious dogma, even those most compatible with it. If it is properly understood as law and not confused with theology it will serve this nation, and others, however their religious complexions change. Conceived as religious dogma which tells us something about the way the church should be organized, it can be satisfactory to only a few of the people who live under it. And even they would see the wisdom of treating it as a political article of peace, I think, if a new majority began to talk about the "Catholic State," or another, echoing their fathers, began to conceive of the church as "the State at prayer."

JOHN COGLEY.

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As one studies the annual lists, certain patterns and tendencies do appear

American Best Sellers

by JOHN P. SISK

THE PRESENT YEAR marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of Hervey Allen's *Anthony Adverse,* the grandfather of today's wide-ranging, outsized best seller. *Anthony* sold 300,000 copies in its first six months and one million in its first two years; eventually its various editions, domestic and foreign, lined a wall in its author's study. More significantly, perhaps, it inaugurated an era of historical fiction the end of which is not yet.

The period—a neat twenty-five years—invites isolation for study. A quarter of a century is a nice unit to work with; one expects to find things rising and falling in it and taking some kind of distinctive shape. Indeed, superficially considered, the past twenty-five years do have a kind of completeness about them: they begin in depression following war and boom, move through war into boom again and end in what is, if not a depression, at least a depressed kind of boom. One is all the more tempted then to find in the best sellers of this period some indication of its nature and direction.

Unfortunately, however, this is an immensely complicated and often puzzling field of study. At one time sales statistics represented the purchase of hardback books, in bookstores and book departments, by individuals whose preferences, it seems now, were influenced by relatively primitive advertising methods. But during the past twenty-five years has come the proliferation of book clubs and paperbacks, to say nothing of the sales stimulation of radio (in 1934 Alexander Wollcott went "quietly mad" over *Good-Bye, Mr. Chips* and so did a good part of his large and obedient audience), movies (the 1953 "movie edition" of *The Robe* was a best seller eleven years after original publication), television and even comic strips (Joe Palooka once boarded an airplane with a Hemingway best-seller in his hand).

Besides, for one eager to draw conclusions there is the sobering thought that best seller statistics are only a partial expression of public taste, that they concern only a fraction (perhaps the least important fraction) of published books, and that often they record completely momentary and baffling appearances. Why, for instance, should there have been three canasta books among the top ten non-fiction books in 1949? Why, in 1937, twenty years before Russia had frightened us with her scholarship, should Hogben's difficult *Mathematics for the Million* have been a best seller?

STILL, as one studies the *Publisher's Weekly* annual lists of the leading fiction and non-fiction books (conveniently gathered together in Alice Payne Hackett's *60 Years of Best Sellers*) certain patterns and tendencies do appear.

There is, for example, the predominance of historical novels. In all but one or two years there was at least one of these among the top ten, and since 1945 there have been seven years when they made up half the list. The temptation is to dismiss this phenomenon as a kind of romantic escape in a troubled era, but an escape is at least an implicit criticism, and most escapes measure what they escape from with an ideal, however naive and impractical. Whatever else they are (sometimes they are good history), historical novels, like western and mystery stories, are expressions of dissatisfaction with a world in which there appears to be no chance for certain kinds of heroism, and in which complexity and uncertainty spoil the melodramatic clarity of character and action that for many people is essential to their peace of mind and comprehension of life.

Historical fiction expresses also a radical, if insufficiently tested, optimism about the meaning of history: the belief that if one looks into it, it will be found to have a story pattern in which enduring values stand out prominently. That is why the historical novel, like the Elizabethan history play, tends to be the soap opera of the past. Even its length is a soap opera characteristic: *Gone With the Wind, Northwest Passage, The Captain from Castile* and *The Tree of Liberty* range between seven hundred and over a thousand pages. One does not so much read such books as live with them, the way one lives with "Helen Trent," and often with the same uncomplicated delight.

But it is a kind of living that is involved with a real fascination with history, however oversimplified or dis-

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torted it may be. Santayana pointed out fifty years ago, during another period when historical fiction was in high favor, that our interest in history is in relation to our awareness of separation from the past. When a nation is young it makes history and so in a sense the past does not exist for it; but when it is no longer young and no longer sure of what kind of history to make, the past returns. It may be that the current interest in historical fiction is not only an indirect criticism of the disturbing present but an anxious groping into the past for the lost connections that will define and save us.

Another phenomenon of the period, particularly since the war, is the peace of mind, uplift and religious books. The sheer number of these books is impressive, whether one interprets it as a national failure of nerve or a genuine religious renaissance. Throughout the period the sale of religious books in general has increased, both in volume and in percentage of all books sold. During the war years Douglas' *The Robe* set an all-time record for fiction when it stayed on the best seller lists for thirty-two months. *The Keys of the Kingdom, Peace of Mind, The Miracle of the Bells, The Apostle* and *The Cardinal* all spent two years on the best seller lists, and in 1949 four out of five best selling non-fiction books were religious.

Whatever these facts may mean, there has certainly been in this period a noticeable change of attitude towards religion: one is no longer so likely to lose caste in intellectual and academic circles when he is known to have sincere and even orthodox religious convictions. Even such displays as the atmosphere of prayer in which the last Robinson-Basilio fight ended no longer seems so bizarre as they once did, and it is beginning to seem as natural for a billboard to advise us to go to church on Sunday as to urge us to buy beer.

The fact that many of these religious books have little if any literary value and may be otherwise spoiled by sentimentality, cant or a desire simply to jump on a profitable bandwagon must be noted. Objectively considered, inferior inspirational and religious books may be no worse than inferior books on any subject, but they certainly seem worse, possibly because one suspects that their power to subvert the cause they profess to serve is greater.

But this is only part of the picture. If the term renaissance is too strong (inducing us to hope for too much on the one hand and assuming on the other that something never really dead has been born again) there remains a definite shift in popular attitude. Perhaps it is significant that the quarter-century begins with the publication of Jung's *Modern Man in Search of a Soul.* Perhaps we should count the popular success of uplift and religious books as a form of criticism of an age that is lacking in fundamental values and an eager, if often confused, groping after those values in the realization that we have come to a point where the future without them is unthinkable.

THERE ARE a great number of books on these yearly lists that point to nothing in particular but simply reflect what was going on or establish as final what one suspected at the time. Auction bridge gives way to contract bridge; Steinbeck represents the social protest of the thirties, a period we tend to forget, as if the war had walled it away from us; World War II is on the lists, seemingly much more competently and realistically reported than World War I, though by 1945 we were sick of it and turning back to our first love, historical fiction. The great number of do-it-yourself books (since the war, books on home building, cooking, flower arranging, decorating and barbecuing have all been best sellers) should, I imagine, be seen in relation to the post-war housing boom, the growth of suburbia and the shorter work-week. And given the rapidly shrinking world we live in, it is not surprising that John Gunther has been five times a best seller.

Though there was little of what is called lasting literature on the lists, Galsworthy, Virginia Woolf, Thomas Wolfe, Sinclair Lewis, Santayana, Aldous Huxley, Van Wyck Brooks, Hemingway, St. Exupery, Marquand and Steinbeck all appear at least once and the last five at least twice. In the last ten years nine of the Pulitzer Prize winners have been best sellers. The late Frederick Lewis Allen might safely say now, as he did when he surveyed best sellers in 1935, that there has been a gain in average quality over the previous period.

More significant, perhaps, is the fact that the period begins and ends with attacks on the advertising business (Kallert's *100 Million Guinea Pigs* and Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders*). Indeed, books professing to expose the various shapes of evil working behind the too often deceptively bland surface of our society are a minor characteristic of these years. Carlson *(Under Cover)* exposes the saboteurs, Hobson the anti-Semites, Wakeman *(The Hucksters)* Madison Avenue,

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Flesch *(Why Johnnie Can't Read)* the public schools, Hoover *(Masters of Deceit)* the Communists, and Lait and Mortimer *(USA Confidential)* practically everybody.

Another marked change from the lists before 1933 is the large number of humor books. Many of the best selling authors in this category are also on the all-time list of best sellers (for instance, Bob Hope, Mac Hyman, Marion Hargrove and Betty MacDonald). What with *The Egg and I* and *The Plague* Miss MacDonald spent four years (1945-1948) on the lists, and if she helped the country keep its mind off its wounds and early peace-time perplexities she may also have cast the kind of blight over American popular humor that Milton once cast over English blank verse.

One meaning of the humor and exposé books (to say nothing of the vast amount of such literature not represented on the best seller lists) is that both humor and the inside dope have the effect of reducing a perplexing problem to controllable dimensions. What you can laugh at you are safe from, and if you can laugh loud enough and long enough you are completely safe. Who knows the extent to which *See Here, Private Hargrove's* 2,260,000 copies helped the public manage the emotional impact of the war? And there is a release of tension in the discovery of the truth behind false seeming just as there is in laughter. One has the exhilarating experience of getting the situation back into his own hands, of even getting his own virtue back, and of having at the same time a scapegoat that can be blamed for bedevilling problems. Thus the unmasking of Stalin was a heaven-sent shot in the arm for East and West. Exposé and humor may be only pseudo-solutions to problems; nevertheless I suspect that both kinds of reading will be very noticeably present on best seller lists until more genuine solutions have been found.

SO FAR I have been talking mainly about hardback books bought by individuals from bookstores. But though the records of such purchases may be, as Miss Hackett says, "more interesting for the student of social history and literary taste," they do not tell the whole story. They do not, for instance, give us the cheering information that Dr. Spock's *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* and *The Boy Scouts Handbook* outsold everything but the Bible during these years.

Mystery and western stories rarely if ever appear on the annual lists, which do not take into account book club and paperback sales. Yet when we turn to the over-all best seller list we find that seven of the first fifteen books were written by Mickey Spillane, published over the period 1947-1950, and that none of them sold less than three and a half million copies. During the quarter century the combined sale of Spillane, Earl Stanley Gardner and Ellery Queen books was 148 million copies. Crime, sex and violence (represented by such writers as Hammet, Cain, Caldwell, Chandler, Algren and O'Hara) have, as one might expect, honored places on this list. Westerns (represented by Max Brand, Ernest Haycox and Luke Short) appear less frequently.

It is now a commonplace to trace a connection between these subjects and the uncertainty, anxiety and frustrations of the age. In their own fashion these books accuse our era of a lack of order and purpose, and even try rather desperately to compensate for moral and religious inadequacies. Indeed, a critic surveying all these lists from the vantage point of a hundred years hence might see more clearly than we can now that what characterizes them in their significant categories, especially in the later years, is something like what Henry James called the imagination of disaster.

But the lists also raise questions the answers to which might be more interesting than any based on available information. Who reads what books and under what conditions? How many of society's leaders read how much cheap sensational literature? A great deal of such literature, especially in paperback form, performs for the reader the function of a three-day business or convention trip. It is a holiday release from the restrictions of the normal environment. What percentage of what group needs such holidays and how often? Since 1952 the non-fiction on the annual lists has tended to outsell fiction, as if the reading public were beginning to catch up with Maugham's statement that "to write a good novel requires intelligence, but not of a very high order." It might be useful to know what percentage of men read fiction at all and how many of those readers prefer fiction written by women.

All these questions must remain the subjects of precarious speculations, awaiting the appearance of analysts armed with an inconceivable survey and a correlating calculus unimaginably subtle. In the meantime, the period ends with one certainty: the people who write and publish books are as uncertain as ever about what makes a best seller. This is an unqualifiedly good thing. It relieves writers (or at least the less foolish ones) from the responsibility of trying to write best sellers.

Most best sellers, I suspect, will continue to be written not to any conscious formula but by writers with formula minds, whose personal formulas happen, for a number of largely unpredictable reasons, to appeal to very many other formula minds. Such best sellers may not be literature but they will have a kind of honesty about them: the honesty of writers who believe that their formulas are reality. Writers of whatever caliber, in other words, have no other recourse than to follow Sir Philip Sidney's advice: look in your heart and write.

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THE SCREEN

BIRTH WITHOUT TEARS

FOR MANY YEARS the movies suggested childbirth scenes by calling for "boiling water—lots of it," until it finally became a cliché. Nowadays films incline to the sentimental trailing-clouds-of-glory approach or Jennifer Jones' seemingly endless agonizing on the operating table or Judy Holliday's bubbly good humor and temper tantrums. But now, with dignity and realism, the ever-practical French have devoted a whole film to this subject. In a way, "The Case of Dr. Laurent" is a propaganda film, stressing as it does the advantages of "natural childbirth," but it by no means neglects its plot to deliver a lecture.

Its story concerns a doctor who, after many years in a Paris clinic, comes to a village in the Maritime Alps to replace a retiring physician. After assisting at a particularly painful delivery and realizing he will have many obstetrical cases here, he tries to introduce "natural childbirth" to the villagers. He has to overcome superstition, skepticism, the scorn of matriarchs who insist that suffering is necessary and good with childbirth, and the anger of the midwife and doctors from neighboring towns who think he is attempting to steal their patients. But eventually he gathers a small class of interested women and men who become convinced that women can give birth without pain or fear. He emphasizes the need of training for a painless delivery—with exercises similar to an athlete's. And when one of his patients, an unmarried pregnant woman, agrees to follow his course, the film concentrates on her training and in its tense climax actually shows the delivery of her baby by this "natural childbirth" method.

Obviously "The Case of Dr. Laurent" is an unusual and strictly adult film. It was written and directed by Jean-Paul Le Chanois, who never talks down to his audience and who definitely favors this method of painless delivery. His cast responded well to his sensitive though realistic direction. Jean Gabin, tight-lipped and unflinching, is very good as Dr. Laurent; and so are Nicole Courcel, as the unwed mother who becomes the doctor's Exhibit A in this village, and Sylvia Monfort, as a mother who goes through a painful delivery at the picture's beginning and resents her husband thereafter. The good supporting cast, which includes some actors and many villagers in St. Martin de Vesuble, in Haut Provence, where the film was made, help to give the picture its documentary atmosphere. Some of this is lost, however, in the rather slapstick scenes during which the women of the village take Nicole Courcel in a rickety bus to the city after her labor starts, so that she can have her baby before the Medical Association that is grilling Dr. Laurent. Director Le Chanois no doubt did this to add to the drama, but it wasn't necessary, as the movie is sufficiently dramatic visually and in ideas without any hokum. Furthermore, it is daring enough to have its unwed mother refuse to marry her baby's father, whom she does not love or respect, and to have Dr. Laurent criticize severely Sylvia Monfort, who refuses to share her husband's bed. "The Case of Dr. Laurent" will have a limited appeal, but its main point—that childbirth need not be frightful or frightening—deserves commendation.

TWO OTHER new films, both of a historical nature, have to do not with mothers but with young sons. "The Light in the Forest," based on Conrad Richter's novel, is set in the Ohio Valley in 1764 and has James MacArthur playing a white boy who was raised by the Delaware Indians but is forced, according to the terms of a treaty, to return to his real parents. Back in Pennsylvania, True Son, as the Indians called him, is treated with love and understanding and firmness by his mother and father (Jessica Tandy and Frank Ferguson) but the boy, already a teenager, rebels against such white man's customs as living indoors and taking a bath. With the help of a wise scout (Fess Parker) and a lovely bond-servant (Carol Lynley) True Son is well on the way to becoming adjusted, in spite of the taunts of his Indian-hating uncle (Wendell Corey), when the uncle kills one of his Indian friends. The boy runs away and joins the Delawares, but is later cast out when he warns the whites of an ambush.

Walt Disney has given this interesting story a good production, with plenty of local color and authentic period touches. Children will no doubt be delighted with "The Light in the Forest," which has plenty of fascinating Indian lore and settlers' tradition, as well as enough fighting to keep things exciting. Teenagers may even go for the romance between True Son and the indentured servant girl. And, without getting didactic, the film also has such well-planted lessons as "You can't make a plow horse out of a wild colt, but if you make friends with him, he'll look over your fence."

ANOTHER FILM about a youngster is "Dangerous Exile," an import from England that tells an unlikely and melodramatic story of a very famous boy, the son of France's Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. According to this version, based on Vaughan Wilkins' novel *A King Reluctant,* nine-year-old Louis XVII (Richard O'Sullivan) was flown over to Wales in a balloon after the execution of his parents and rescued by a visiting American girl (Belinda Lee) who sheltered him in the castle of her aunt (Martita Hunt). The plot, which has several flashbacks in France and gets involved in spying and counter-spying among the French Royalists and Revolutionists, soon becomes

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very complicated; but Director Brian Desmond Hurst never allows its intricacies to get in the way of the fast action. On the side of the young king is dashing and daring Louis Jourdan; and among the boy's enemies are Keith Michell as a determined Revolutionary and Finlay Currie as a sinister Britisher. With all its derring-do and fanciful story, "Dangerous Exile" will appeal to youthful audiences—if they can keep its plot straight—and adults might admire the handsome color photography of the castles and beaches.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

THE SWEPT CHAMBER

MR. ALFRED LUNT and Miss Lynn Fontanne have closed the formal season with a remarkable *frisson* of contemporary feeling. "The Visit," a black morality by the Swiss dramatist Friedrich Duerrenmatt—a playwright whose work, it would seem, enjoys considerable European repute—is to be distinguished surely for its provocative comment on varieties of tragic ambition, but even more for its vivid image of the terms and values of a moral world which has the climate of a dominant modern sensibility. I shall not object if this statement is read as claiming for "The Visit" the highest degree of documentary interest; taken as art, the drama is something considerably else, elusive and imperfect: what might be called a work of incomplete responsibility.

Herr Duerrenmatt's singular power here, though I would hazard elsewhere too, is that of the fabulist, never to be despised or taken lightly, for the fable, in its line and progression, is ever the animating soul of drama. "The Visit" is an action in the classic Aristotelian sense, with its ritual movement of purpose-passion-perception (Mr. Kenneth Burke's terms), and its *invoked* (if not achieved: that must be tested) experience of truth and justice and inevitability. I anticipate my final criticism of Herr Duerrenmatt's play —which I shall hope to support—when I say that these last insights seem to me not compelled, not issuing out of an irresistible tragic rhythm, but rather engineered, marvelously, with a massive Teutonic efficiency. Still so: what must be honored here is the primacy Herr Duerrenmatt assigns to plot, fable, idea, form—what you will—and the strength he derives from that. It may be remarked, not maliciously, that "The Visit" can well use such strength, for of poetic investitures or amplification, of those subsidiary graces which lend to talent its distinctive savor, the work is nakedly devoid. Its language—at least in Mr. Maurice Valency's (rather muted, one gathers) adaptation—lacks definition and tone, and Herr Duerrenmatt's conscious dramatic metaphors—the blind eunuchs, the panther in the streets—are tagged with an assertive, not to say ponderous, literalism which recalls all Mr. Stark Young's strictures on Anglo-Saxon art and its "treacle and itch of symbolism." This denial, in "The Visit," of all sensuous relief seems, moreover, not so much an intentional asceticism as something inherent: Webster, after all, was "much possessed by death/and saw the skull beneath the skin," yet perverse as it may seem his sinuous malignity and phosphorescence of decay have an allure—for all their insufferable chaos and obsession—which Herr Duerrenmatt sadly wants.

Consider, then, the fable: of Madame Claire Zachanassian, a fantasy of monstrous, indifferent power, come again in maturity to "make a brothel out of the town which made [her] a whore." In the ceremonious entourage which attends her arrival is the empty coffin which, occupied, will be carried before her at the no less ceremonious departure. Her victim is to be an insignificant, sentimental *homme moyen sensuel,* on the dark side of middle age, and he is beaten first into a helpless moral pulp, and then into a kind of dry, remote abstraction of responsibility, no less terrible. Against this private accounting of past and present is played the larger motif of public necessity and greed and hideous justification: a portrait of society all the more venomous for the glacial leisure with which its strokes are etched.

It would seem plain that Herr Duerrenmatt has sought to mesh two themes, or lines of inquiry, in "The Visit": a vision of man, not as the prey of his own infected will and irrational powers beyond him, but as the *conscious* agent in his own violation; this is joined to a symbolic parable of personal guilt, rich with its own comment on an ineluctable reality, and not incidentally, rooted in a worked but still fertile vein of European experience. Of the dramatist's image of society one admits the black testimony, while expressing wonder that Herr Duerrenmatt can have thought it to carry, at this unillusioned point of history, either moral revelation or spiritual shock. It is comparable in feeling to Miss Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery,* or to Mark Twain's *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg,* though lacking the ritual charisma and horror of the first, and the private, neurotic vehemence of the latter. As art and as conviction this aspect of "The Visit" seems to me to be manipulated solely by will and theatrical pressures, recalling Joyce's discrimination of the static quality of the esthetic emotion, and his strictures on those improper arts ("pornographical or didactic") which excite the kinetic responses of desire or loathing. In this vein, the execution with which "The Visit" closes would be seen as an assault on the spirit, meanly trapping it into feelings from which there can be no escape.

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It is clear, of course, that Herr Duerrenmatt has been much provoked, if not influenced, by Brecht, taking from him—or from the sensibility which flows like an energy from so major a figure as Brecht—the concept of the theater as tribunal, the formal qualities of Brecht's "narrative realism" and the celebrated "alienation effect" with its attempt to detach and chasten our indiscriminate responses of involvement. It is equally clear, as Mr. Eric Bentley observes, that the didacticism of Brecht's intention is redeemed by the poetry of his method: at his best, he strikes an exquisite balance. We are free, paradoxically, to reject his social thesis because the personal experience of his various fables is articulated with such delicacy and strength. One can find no comparable poise in "The Visit": Herr Duerrenmatt sacrifices to his exhausted image of human venality the very actualities of past responsibility and present justice which would give the bondage of Madame Zachanassian and her victim a resonance beyond the grotesque. I am aware of seeming to ask for a play in another—perhaps Ibsenite—tradition, and word, of course, has gone quickly round town that "The Visit" is madly "expressionistic." Yet Herr Duerrenmatt's imperfect fusion of his dramatic motifs and energies deprives "The Visit" of a consummate quality, a last purity and certainty of intention: an *idea,* finally, clear and inescapable, and anchored not in general concepts, but in the cost and baffling harmony of human fate.

In this matter of "The Visit" and its pretensions to tragedy, I remember Mr. Morris Philipson's persuasive argument (in a recent number of the *Journal of Philosophy*) that seriousness in tragic drama must rest upon the joint relationship of individual human responsibilities and impersonal powers. Since Herr Duerrenmatt has constituted his drama only, or at least chiefly, of relations among abstract concepts, you have, as Mr. Philipson observes generally, not tragedy but something akin to philosophy or the sciences. It is this, and not "negative values" in the dreary moralistic sense, which accounts for the play's curious nullity. No one will deny it intellectual zest and fierceness, the harsh whip of conscience, occasional images and intimations of a destiny profoundly felt, but beyond that, it is difficult the claim for "The Visit" more than Mr. T. R. Henn, in *The Harvest of Tragedy,* claims for Sartre and Camus and Anouilh, and for their ". . . tragedy of confused and evolutionary values, informed by a strong fear for humanity. It sees at work an immense capricious cruelty. It is perpetually on the defensive, for the highest values it can transmit are irony, satire, stoicism. . . . It is a tragedy of the most profound interest for the contemporary European situation, the record of a mood which has swept clean that chamber of the human mind, and as yet has set nothing in its place."

This production of "The Visit"—mounted with such luxury of ambition and unstinting care by The Producers Theatre—derives its poetry from Herr Teo Otto's decors, its glamour from Mr. and Mrs. Lunt, and a certain dramatic imposition and stylized novelty from Mr. Peter Brook's staging. This last is most potent in an external sense, a marvel of fluent patterns, but oddly without any intimation of deep or inward stress; nor could I quell the impression either that Mr. Brook's supporting company was made up of very poor actors, or that he was largely indifferent in his demands on them. It would be provocative, also, to study how much Mr. Brook's insistence on stylization denies to "The Visit" that flush and sting of personal involvement which might have relieved it. Herr Otto's settings are full of that austerity of suggestion and impalpable distinction of the best European design: always imaginative yet always actual, beautiful not only in their poetic restatement, but in their control and solution of problems of stage space.

Mr. Lunt and Miss Fontanne are doubtless taking the pleasures of moral satisfaction, as well as those of commerce and of art, in their success, so full has been the tide of praise for their Audacity in choosing Herr Duerrenmatt's grim fable. To those who do not share the automatic Anglo-Saxon preference for the Uncompromising in art, and who have never thought to patronize the Lunts for what use they make of their

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talents, this will, of course, have its own irony. A long reign in the kingdom of the trivial exacts, to be sure, like all things else in life, its just price, and Mr. and Mrs. Lunt bring to their performances in "The Visit" no considerable surprise or extension; one infers, indeed, their native wisdom in rarely moving out of the charmed, infallible circle of sensibility and interest. Mr. Lunt creates a figure of realistic shabbiness and decay, not so much pathetic as distasteful, and rather overstated in the scenes of brutal terror. Miss Fontanne, with her porcelain lustre and finish, imperial distance, diabolic invulnerability to time, is transcendently of the theater; in Castillo's ravishingly chaste dresses, she cuts on the eye ineffaceable images.

Nevertheless, it must be stated, what neither she nor Mr. Lunt bring to the play is *idea,* in the way (we are told) that Duse brought idea to Ibsen's "Lady from the Sea," discovering for it a poetic truth, dilating and enlarging it beyond the very conceptions of the dramatist. The Lunts assign to "The Visit" a due and even brilliant justice, but nothing more. Miss Fontanne, in particular, might have deepened all her motifs of retribution and perverse love; given us, on the emotional (which is to say, the realistic) level, something of this woman's fire as well as her ice, some imaginative flame to set against the glacial movement of Herr Duerrenmatt's thesis. She chooses, instead, the modes of ritual: remote, formal, ceremoniously indifferent, yet one cannot know whether out of belief in their expressive content, or sheer refusal to imagine the play as more than allegory. La Rochefoucauld said that the greatest miracle love can accomplish is to conquer coquetry, but we have still to see the passions of art dislodge Mr. and Mrs. Lunt from their crystal perch of security and conscious effect.

It remains to thank Mr. Robert Dowling for a spacious new theater, graciously dedicated to Mr. Lunt and Miss Fontanne, and—is the phrase "handsomely appointed"?—in what *Vogue* magazine would doubtless call "the new revival of Elegance." I found its damask and gilt scones and powder-blue fragility not a little cloying, even ostentatious—nothing confirms more sharply those ominous sociological speculations about the feminine domination of American taste—and the ceiling cherubs are decidely a mistaken homage to Tiepolo; a balcony foyer, however, is affectionately evocative of the parquet splendor of the Paris Opera. The innovation of a street marquee which douses you at intermission with cold air in summer and hot air in winter, is both merciless and insane. Do not step, as I did on the chilly, bleak night of my attendance at "The Visit," into the gutter, or you may never be the same again. I foresee a theater public next season decimated by meteorological conflict. (*At the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

THE SUMMER NUMBER may be said to be privileged. For we are to publish a new poem by Siegfried Sassoon. It is his first poem as a Catholic, a longish, meditative poem holding the gem of Catholic truth and happiness with the discreet intimacy which has always been Mr. Sassoon's distinguishing strength. We offer, too, a long article by Père Dubarle, philosopher and biblical critic, on the opening chapters of Genesis. This article is already recognized, in its French original, as grasping the real nettle of Genesis, which may be taken in hand only by an intrepid and sober mind. Dom Ralph Russell gives us the fruit of some valuable research on the Ascension as originally understood and as expressed, for him who can read it, in the sacred text. Not so much an event on its own, the Ascension forms, with the Resurrection, a single triumph of the glorious Christ. But it is above all from the Abbey of Maria Laach that the vision of the glorious Christ has been given once again to our time, and we conclude the number with an article on the mystery-presence theology of Dom Odo Casel. The article is by Dom Neunheuser of Maria Laach.

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THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

Downside Abbey, Bath, Somerset, England

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Chronicle of an Island World

THE HARD BLUE SKY. By Shirley Ann Grau. Knopf. $5.

By ELIZABETH BARTELME

YOUNG, lively and meticulously shaped, Shirley Ann Grau's first novel is triumphant proof that the originality and craftsmanship of *The Black Prince*, her earlier collection of short stories, was merely the beginning of her development as a gifted and distinctive writer.

Her basic approach in the stories was one of careful atmospheric setting. She has used the same technique in the novel, painstakingly describing the coast, the islands, the desolate sweep of marshes, birds, oaks and palms, the packs of wild dogs that overrun the Isle aux Chiens—her island world, a terrain outlined minutely and enclosed by water and the hot summer sky.

Leisurely she picks up the first threads of her story, the children playing in the heat, baiting Eddie Livaudais's illegitimate child who lives with his aunt and uncle, and watching the white-sailed sloop making for the island. Enter Inky D'Alfonso, the sailboat's pilot, an outlander who soon discovers he is going to bear the full scrutiny of the island people, who waste no time on sophisticated indifference.

His first interested encounter with Cecile Boudreau leaves him disgruntled and a little uncertain. Cecile has a husband whom she loves. Inky for her is simply a bird of passage to be examined, commented on and questioned. But there is Annie Landry, an unhappy kid, mired in adolescence and longing for escape from the island and the new wife her father has brought home after his first wife's death. Inky doesn't particularly want Annie and Annie doesn't know what she wants, but the island offers limited opportunities for amusement and before long Annie is spending most of her days sitting on Inky's boat and a good part of her nights as well.

Her stepmother worries about Annie; her father is helplessly philosophical about her; Perique, the boy who loves her, is miserable. But the rest of the islanders have more on their minds than Annie and her new boyfriend. Henry Livaudais, Eddie's son, has vanished into the swamp on a hunting expedition and not returned. The search for Henry is organized. Little by little it becomes obvious that Henry is not going to be found—and sickeningly clear what has happened to him. The tragedy is compounded when Belle and Eddie discover that their son was not alone, and smouldering rivalries flare violently to set off a chain reaction of disaster for the whole island.

It is disaster that finally propels Annie and Inky, after a rough and unhappy leavetaking from Annie's father, into an uncertain future together. Annie's realization as she leaves the island behind that she is isn't very happy is tempered by the knowledge that she isn't very sad either. "She was waiting, waiting for things to happen to her. Things that could be handled and changed. And things that could just be handled." Exit Inky with Annie —and a few stormy seas ahead.

Miss Grau writes wonderfully well about people—there isn't a character on the island who doesn't come alive, and no two, even though everyone on the island seems to be more or less vaguely related, who are alike. Her handling of the relations between men and women is particularly perceptive, but again it is her knowledge of and interest in character that reveals so much about these relations. One cannot help but be caught and charmed by the gaiety and courageous strength of the relationship between Cecile and Hector, or pity the confusion that exists between Annie and her sailor or the hatred that flashes from Philomene toward her unfaithful husband. She makes one understand the reluctant giving between Belle and Eddie, the tenderness of the shy and inarticulate love that grows between Al Landry and his middle-aged wife. And one understands it clearly because each person is so clearly himself.

Above all, Miss Grau is a natural story-teller, and her novel has a kind of casual looseness that makes room for many stories, tales which, far from destroying the unity of the book, tighten the fabric of the world she constructs. You come off this island knowing the people intimately, the pattern and rhythm of their speech, the things that have shaped their lives, their fortitude, humor, simplicity. They are fortunate to have a chronicler like Shirley Ann Grau. She is an extraordinarily fine writer.

Heroic Mission to the Chinese

THUNDER IN THE DISTANCE. By Jacques Leclercq. Translated by George Lamb. Sheed & Ward. $5.

By PHILIP DEASY

"HE WAS only little Vincent Lebbe, a scraggy fellow in failing health. But he was also a priest of the Lord, and the day was to come when the Vicar of Christ would speak to him and the Church of China would be born from his brain." When he set off for his first mission work in China in early 1902, Père Lebbe, Belgian born, was "a priest of the Lord" in the Society of Missionary Priests founded by St. Vincent de Paul. When he died in 1940 he was no longer a Vincentian (he was granted a dispensation from the Pope in 1933) but he had founded two religious communities in China as well as two missionary societies in Europe, and had seen all his earlier dreams of a Chinese hierarchy, of Chinese priests treated as equals by the European clergy, and of a living Church in China come true.

A great part of this biography ("Thunder in the Sun" is the Eng-

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lish translation of Père Lebbe's Chinese name, Lei-Ming-Yuan) by Canon Leclercq of the Catholic University of Louvain is taken up with the unceasing struggles of a young missionary against the "established disorder" of the Chinese missions. Under the protectorate as they were of the French government, administered largely by French priests and bishops of the various missionary societies, the pervading spirit was that of the colonialism mentality and its concomitant, European arrogance. Chinese priests could never hope to be other than "assistant-priests," a Chinese episcopate was unthinkable, and the natives were to be regarded mainly as potential revolutionaries. It was, in short, the kind of condition condemned by the papal encyclical of 1919 on the missions, *Maximum Illud*. The harshest indictment that can be made of the European bishops of China is that they were no more disposed to accept the Pope's pronouncements than they were those of the obstreperous little Père Lebbe.

For a long period of his missionary life Père Lebbe was naive enough to think that by open discussion with and writing to his superiors he could convince them how mistaken they were in their conduct of the missions. How forceful and far-seeing he could be is best noted in the most remarkable pages of *Thunder in the Distance*, the excerpts quoted from a twenty-five page letter Père Lebbe wrote to his superior, Msgr. Reynaud, in September, 1917 during his annual retreat when, as he tells his bishop, "the voice of conscience speaks more loudly than contingent circumstances and ordinary conventions." It is unfortunate that the entire letter wasn't reprinted. There as nowhere else in the book does one understand Canon Leclercq's assertion that the dominant impression left by Père Lebbe was that he was "a unique alliance" of "the penetrating power of a first-class intellect" with the rare "heart of a genius."

The force of Père Lebbe's example and his phenomenal success with the Chinese people were protests even more eloquent. The cumulative effect of all this on his superiors was to arouse mistrust, apprehension, and eventually rejection. The best thing to be done with a potential troublemaker, a breeder of controversy ("an apostate," one Vincentian bishop called him) was to exile him to distant tiny missions, box him in as much as possible, and ultimately to ease him out of China altogether. Which they did. But supported by the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and the kindly intercession of Cardinal Mercier with the Pope, Père Lebbe returned.

From the viewpoint of what is known as the art of biography this book has its faults. It is too rambling and cluttered with detail; it has lapses into mere panegyric and sentimentality; its style, for which the translator may be at least partly to blame, is frequently slipshod. It would take far more, however, than these comparatively minor defects to make the story of Père Lebbe's life any less thoroughly engrossing and inspiring than it is. Canon Leclercq, a close friend of Père Lebbe and his brother, Dom Beda, writes with affection, understanding and unstinted admiration. One is convinced after finishing *Thunder in the Distance* that the real nature of this tough-minded, persistent, saintly apostle has come through. It may seem to be a crushing aftermath to his heroic life that the country to which he so selflessly dedicated himself is now Red China and the living Church he did so much to establish is now part of the Church of Silence. But Communism, as Canon Leclercq reassures us, has behind it no eternal promises.

Recreation of Things Past

A NEW ENGLAND GIRLHOOD. By Nancy Hale. Little, Brown. $3.75.

By JEAN HOLZHAUER

IT IS Miss Hale's thesis, outlined in her Introduction to this collection of twenty-one essays, that while past, present and future were divisible like All Gaul to her grandfather (Edward Everett Hale, who published *A New England Boyhood* in 1893) they can never be so to a writer of the post-Freudian era. The experience of her girlhood is inextricably woven with that of her womanhood, she says, in the single, seamless fabric of her life.

In one sense, the *continuum* of the emotional life, this assertion is, of course, true, but it is unfortunately difficult to demonstrate for any except the most profound writers: one thinks of Proust's use of "the involuntary memory." Charming as she is, Miss Hale cannot by any stretch of sympathy be called profound. In practice, her attempted demonstration reduces to a recital of juxtaposed circumstances: it was thus in my childhood; now it is thus.

So far as recorded experience is concerned, the cleavage is as sharp for her as for her grandfather, and no number of chapters beginning, in effect, "Something happened today to remind me of when I was nine," can counterfeit the unsolicited welling of the unconscious.

This is a technicality, but a valid one in reference to a literary era known more properly, perhaps, as post-Proust than as post-Freud. With one or two exceptions, notably the account of her lost ring, the essays in *A New England Girlhood* display no more than the usual relicts of youth: reminiscence, amusement, an occasional pang of nostalgia, all brought to mind by vaguely parallel experiences in the present. There is none of the hard thrust of surviving, permanent emotion which is often more real than fact, and which makes Miss Mary McCarthy's *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood* a strong book. In the Proustian sense, Miss Hale's memories seem wholly voluntary, and her charm a shade deliberate.

What this comes to, perhaps, is that aside from her distinguished ancestry the author does not repre-

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sent herself as a person of consuming interest to her readers. Her early feeling of being set apart from her contemporaries turns out to have been no more than the common misgivings of the young: Will I have a bid for the prom? Will my dress *do?* Will I have a partner for supper? In instance after instance, she achieves not only acceptance but, in such matters as school leadership and debutante popularity, a kind of unassailable success. Miss Hale is clearly the girl who made it. Alas for the interest of her stories, the outcome was never seriously in doubt.

These matters aside, there is something still to recommend *A New England Girlhood.* With fact and fancy both affectionate, Miss Hale does re-create a period when lemon verbena in the fingerbowls saved dinner guests from torpor, when all grownup ladies *"did* too much," when S. S. Pierce was never pronounced "Peerse," and when "Yankee" was a specific genealogical and not a general geographical term.

Then, too, the book is studded like an English movie with supporting characters whose fascination tends to obscure the leads. Several salty Yankees enter with fondly acid comments about members of Miss Hale's family. One of them, the product of inbreeding, stands daftly on the dunes hoping for the resurrection of her deserted household, but another keeps a clean house and knows about wearing white gloves for paying calls. Miss Hale's own mother appears and reappears, a lonely figure leaning on her red parasol while her little girl plays on the beach. Of all these, and many more, one longs to know what happened next. My personal favorite is Nancy's playmate, May, a "silly" child foolishly acquiescent to the wishes of her apparently mad father. Our last glimpse of May comes in Chapter Thirteen: "Twenty years later, when May lay dying in that slum where Jinny finally discovered her, too late for her alcoholism to be treated. . . ."

Precisely the same kind of reminiscence could have been written had Freud never been born, but *A New England Girlhood* makes pleasant enough—occasionally harrowing enough—reading, for all that.

The Present Crisis of Mankind

MAN AT THE CROSSROADS. By Jose Ferrater Mora. Beacon. $5.

By THOMAS MOLNAR

ACCORDING to Professor Ferrater, man has been repeatedly "at the crossroads." And of these several points of crisis, the author chooses to study the Hellenistic-Roman period and the mid-twentieth century. Nobody will deny that there are many reasons for drawing such a parallel: the disorientation of the citizen who, deprived of his functions in the *polis*, became a mass-man; the political vacuum filled by Caesars; the civil wars; the need for a universal faith—these are phenomena common to both ages.

But the author does not wish to indulge in historical or cultural comparisons for their own sake; he has a thesis to prove. This thesis will be, as he says, an "optimistically realistic" answer to this question: "Is it possible to integrate our steadily enlarging societies—and ultimately the whole of human society—in forms of higher material and spiritual life?"

The crisis of Hellenism, the author says in essence, was resolved by the appearance of the "new man," Christ and Saint Paul, and, in a smaller measure, indicating rather than quenching the spiritual thirst, the philosophers, the Stoics, Zeno, Seneca, etc. The new men and the new faith were soon constituted into an organized body, the Church, because even the living faith requires a community, the community of believers. To call such a group genuine, it is necessary that the freedom it provides should "coincide with the freedom of the person and vice versa."

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I think, however, that the essential problem lies elsewhere. The ancient State was totalitarian in character insofar as it was unable to distinguish between man's two commitments, to the community and to his conscience, to God. Research shows the proliferation, in Greek and Roman societies, of various clubs, circles, sects, etc., some open, for the exercise of sports, for example, others clandestine, but without any real secret to guard. Into this society Christianity broke with the force of a storm. Among the many *pseudo*-groups that the post-Alexandrian and Roman empires tolerated, the Church was a *real* group, fighting for individual consciences, willing to suffer persecution in the name of something much higher than—although compatible with—the community and the state.

This is not to say that Christianity broke wih the antique tradition and with Rome; in fact, the bishops were to take over the civilian administration of their parishioners when the Roman army and administration retreated before the barbarians; for the latter, the Church and its organized bodies represented Rome. But, on the level of history, the Church also represented something radically new, an anti-Rome, and this was made clearer as the centuries progressed and as new attempts were made, by Germans, French, or English, to re-create the Empire.

From what corner is such a renewal to come for contemporary society? As today, so in the time of Caesars, "society was undergoing a process of leveling, and thereby lost all possibility of engendering a complex structure through which chinks of freedom could find an entrance"; in such cases "what happens is that the center of power becomes progressively less localizable and hence less responsible. All appeared to rule, actually no one did." Yet, writes Professor Ferrater later, "[today] the organization of society must set out from a certain clearly acknowledged tendency toward a world unification of such a nature that it does not prevent the survival of a great variety of ways of life."

The question we are then entitled to ask of him is this: if "chinks of freedom" cannot penetrate the granite block of modern society, if power exists but cannot be localized and held responsible, what are the guarantees for the survival of various ways of life? Where is the group which may successfully combat the inertia of the many pseudo-groups with their duplication of each other's functions? Why should we believe that an already de-personalized world might be saved by "unification," by a bigger-than-ever global machinery? We agree with the author that "there is to be a revival"—but we believe, obstinately, that only free individuals, minorities, élites can accomplish it.

The last few pages of the book are sadly disappointing. Professor Ferrater wants to get through his message of optimism even if it is at the price of platitude. "We must seek an equilibrium between God, Nature, Society, and Man," he writes, and this equilibrium "should be dynamic," always emphasizing the one element of the four which seems to be sacrificed to the others. What the author does not tell us is what group, what minority will restore the desired equilibrium, and—an equally important point—by what mechanism, what operation. Given the now existing techniques of uniformization and dehumanization, the task may be even more difficult than it was at the time of the Caesars.

If the author could provide an answer to these questions, he would hold the intellectual key to the future; as he is satisfied with an act of faith and a gesture of optimism, he shows the reader only a painted, not a real, horizon.

REVIEWERS

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DR. THOMAS A. DOOLEY, a thirty-one year old physician from St. Louis, is a front-lines soldier in mankind's greatest war – the war against human suffering. Since 1955 Dr. Dooley has worked with dedication to bring his medical skills to tens of thousands of Southeast Asian peoples. Many had never seen a doctor. In 1955-56, as a Navy doctor, Tom Dooley treated thousands of Vietnamese refugees who fled from the Communist North to Free South Vietnam. Dr. Dooley returned to Laos in late 1956 as a civilian representative of the International Rescue Committee, to build new medical clinics and to practice medicine in the jungle only a few miles from the Chinese border.

As a result of his experiences, Dr. Dooley returned to the United States in early 1958 determined to help organize a systematic onslaught against the greatest single scourge to the human race—disease. In cooperation with the IRC, he helped to found MEDICO.

MEDICO—a division of the International Rescue Committee—has been organized on a worldwide basis to fight the only war which MEDICO seeks—the war against disease in the remote areas of Asia and Africa. MEDICO's soldiers are American doctors, nurses, dentists and medical technicians. MEDICO teams are being sent to areas where medicine is only a word and suffering is an endless reality. The weapons of MEDICO are drugs, medical equipment, and the dollars which the American people are generously providing.

The frontlines of this war are everywhere that medicine is desperately needed. In Laos, for example, one of every two infants dies at or before birth. In Thailand and Indonesia, twelve million human beings are hideously deformed by yaws. More than two hundred million men, women and children throughout the world are afflicted with malaria. All these and many other illnesses can be cured by simple applications of modern medicine.

Dr. Dooley returns to Laos in July under MEDICO sponsorship to build a new hospital. MEDICO has sent a dentist and equipment for a complete dental clinic plus a quantity of drugs and supplies to the African hospital of Dr. Albert Schweitzer, MEDICO's Honorary Patron. The hospital work of Dr. Gordon S. Seagrave, the legendary Burma Surgeon, is now sponsored by MEDICO. Still other teams are in preparation to be sent to the disease-ravaged areas of the world as funds are found to finance them.

Death and disease know no national boundaries. For this reason MEDICO is a non-sectarian, person-to-person program dedicated to the goal of alleviating human suffering on a universal basis. Medical personnel—and scores have volunteered—provide the hands and skill to cure the sick. The heart of MEDICO must be with you.

You can help arm MEDICO's soldiers in this crucial struggle against humanity's greatest single enemy. Help us to send into the frontlines the needed doctors, drugs and medical supplies. The extent of your support will determine the size of MEDICO's army and the scope of the war we can wage.

MEDICO'S OFFICERS

DR. ALBERT SCHWEITZER
Honorary Patron
DR. PETER COMANDURAS
Secretary-General

PROGRAMS in OPERATION
THOMAS A. DOOLEY, M. D.
Laos
GORDON SEAGRAVE, M.D.
Burma

MEDICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
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HOWARD A. RUSK, M.D.
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MEDICO NEEDS

1—$7.00 is the cost of injections needed to cure a hideously deformed child of yaws.

2—10.00 in medical solutions can prevent a child from becoming permanently blind from trachoma.

3—25.00 will supply a midwife kit to a village woman upon completion of her MEDICO training program.

4—50.00 will supply a village aid station with bandages, and equipment for a month.

5—100.00 is the cost of training one indigenous nurse.

6—150.00 will purchase a small kerosene refrigerator for a field hospital's stock of vaccines, or will buy one portable sterilizer.

7—1,000 will maintain a mobile field clinic for one month.

8—3,000 will supply a fully electrically equipped mobile operating unit, including all surgical supplies.

9—25,000 will fully equip, supply and maintain one medical team in the field, on the average, for one year.

MEDICO, a division of the
International Rescue Committee
255 4th Avenue
New York 10, N. Y.

I enclose $_____ to support the MEDICO program of the International Rescue Committee.

I want my contribution used for Project Number 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____STATE_____

Please make checks payable to MEDICO
Contributions are deductible from taxable income

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